

# BUREAU FOR SPANISH WORK IN THE SOUTHWEST

ANNABELLE KENT

**T**HE Spanish Bureau with work in New Mexico, Arizona, and Western Texas was under the direction of Mrs. Anna Kent, secretary for twenty-four years, when she passed to her heavenly home, and was succeeded by her Associate Secretary, Mrs. Ward Platt, with the writer of this sketch as Associate. Mrs. Kent planned on broad lines and the work grew and flourished.

The first permanent school under the Bureau was at Albuquerque, New Mexico, named "Harwood" by the Colorado Conference in recognition of the pioneer work done by Dr. Thomas Harwood and his wife. The first land of the school was bought in 1893 and the school in the new building was opened in March, 1896, with six pupils. Before this a small used cottage was rented. Among the first teachers were Mrs. Annie Norton and Miss Marguerite Tripp. The Misses Ellesworth and Apperson, and Anita Rodriguez, were in charge when the substantial new building opened. Nine years later this building was enlarged, a heating plant established and electric lights added. The building of red brick, two story and attic, is one hundred feet long and accommodates fifty girls. A one-story isolation hospital stands a short distance from the main building.

The girls are taught housework, cooking, sewing, and laundering, together with the regular public school courses of study. Special instruction is given in the Bible and in Spanish. The school property is worth \$28,500. Educators in New Mexico regard this school as one of the best in the State. Two of the early graduates have taken deaconess training and are now serving acceptably.

Work was begun in Las Vegas, New Mexico, in 1887, with Miss Ida Brimmer as first worker, followed by the Misses Nellie Snyder and Cora Bushman. In 1902, Mrs. Kent, in response to repeated appeals to open work in Arizona, after thorough investigation decided that Tucson presented the most favorable opening. Not long after an offer of land was made upon which to locate the school, and it was decided to remove our work from Las Vegas, as the need there was otherwise met. The change was made in 1904, but the school was not opened until 1906, when it began in a five-room bungalow and one tent, with four pupils. Additional desks were provided, and in 1909 twenty-six girls were in training. In 1910 the new building, for which Mrs. Kent had planned and labored for over five years, was completed and the school was moved into it. This is a plastered brick structure on a commanding site which includes an entire city square and is valued at \$25,000. The house was planned to accommodate fifty girls, and forty-five were refused admission the second year for lack of room.

This is a Christian school in which the regular public school course is pursued and work done equal to that of the average public school in Arizona. In addition, industries are taught and girls are prepared not only to become teachers, but to become good homemakers. The first class was graduated in 1913 with six girls, one of whom had taken a full course in millinery, another had spent a year as helper in the Tucson Sanitarium, a third was to be married, and the fourth to enter special missionary service for her own people.

By action of the Board of Managers in 1916, Frances De Pauw Industrial School, in Los Angeles, California, was included in this Bureau. The first appropriation for work among Spanish-speaking girls in Southern California was \$400, made in 1898. Two years later, two prosperous missions had been organized and placed under the care of the General Missionary Society, and an Industrial Home and School had been started by our

Society, with an appropriation increased to thirteen hundred dollars. A building was provided by Mrs. F. M. De Pauw, the Southern California Conference furnished it, and the support of the new institution was assumed by the Woman's Home Missionary Society. Faithful secretaries cared for it in a Bureau by itself, until the merger with other similar schools.

The school occupies a fine location at the junction of two well-paved boulevards, in a rapidly growing part of the city. A laundry, primary school building, and the main building constitute the plant. By the laws of the city, its possibilities are limited to not over fifty girls, and there is always a long waiting list. The work done consists of regular school tasks, and industrial training as in the other schools. Miss Jennie Mathias, the present superintendent, has been connected with the school from its beginning.

In December, 1912, the Rose Gregory Houchen Settlement House in El Paso, Texas, was opened. This beautiful house rises fair and white among the brown adobe dwellings of the humbler Mexican colony. El Paso is the northwest gateway of Mexico. More than half the population are Mexicans, descendants of the red and brown people who were conquered by the fortune hunters from Spain. The religion and language of their conquerors were forced upon them. There are more than 20,000 Mexicans in El Paso, and one sixth of them are children of school age from Spanish-speaking homes.

In 1899, Miss Marguerite J. Tripp opened a Day School in the Spanish Mission chapel, which was carried on for some time under our Society; but work was finally suspended until we could erect a suitable building of our own. Land was bought in 1904 for this purpose, upon which was erected a three-story concrete building valued, with its playground, at \$22,000. Here are the crowded kindergarten, classes in cooking, and sewing for women and girls, mothers' meetings, English class, boys' club and reading room and library. During the second year more than 7,000 passed through its classes.

The rooms of the upper floor provide a pleasant home for the five resident workers, among whom is a Mexican deaconess, a graduate of Harwood School and of Kansas City Training School. Another worker is a young Mexican woman trained in one of our schools. Boys and girls who have little or no chance in the public school flock into this Settlement House, and a warm welcome is extended to parents who attend the religious or social gatherings.

1917.

WOMAN'S HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY  
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

150 Fifth Avenue, New York  
50 or less, 6c.; 50 to 100, 10c.